LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

The following listing of the claims is provided in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121 and replaces all previous versions and listings of the claims.

1. (previously presented) A method for processing image data comprising:

comparing image data representative of a plurality of images, wherein the plurality of images represent spatially adjacent subject matter;

characterizing a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images; and

presenting a viewer with indicia of relative levels of change of the image data for the plurality of images.

2. (cancelled)

3. (cancelled)

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the level of change is characterized by analyzing absolute differences between adjacent images in the plurality of images.

5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein the absolute differences are analyzed on a pixel-by-pixel basis.

6. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein characterizing a level of change of the image data includes characterizing change due to noise in the image data, and not including changes due to noise in the presented indicia.

7. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the presented indicia include a graphical representation of progressive change between images of the plurality of images.

8. (original) The method of claim 7, comprising presenting the viewer with a virtual tool for navigating through the plurality of images based upon the progressive change between the images.

9. (previously presented) A method for diagnosing a patient, comprising:

acquiring a plurality of reconstructed images via a medical imaging system;

comparing image data representative of the plurality of reconstructed images; and

generating a scout navigation tool by characterizing a level of change of the image data from one reconstructed image to the next in the plurality of reconstructed images, the scout navigation tool including a graphical representation of progressive change between reconstructed images of the plurality of reconstructed images and a virtual tool for navigating through the plurality of reconstructed images based upon the level of change.

10. (original) The method of claim 9, comprising displaying the scout navigation tool on a viewable screen.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, comprising receiving inputs from a viewer via the scout navigation tool and displaying reconstructed images from the plurality of reconstructed images based upon the inputs.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, comprising receiving inputs from a viewer via the scout navigation tool and storing reconstructed images from the plurality of reconstructed images based upon the inputs.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, comprising receiving inputs from a viewer via the scout navigation tool and processing reconstructed images from the plurality of reconstructed images based upon the inputs.

14. (original) The method of claim 10, comprising displaying the scout navigation tool adjacent to an image viewing region of the viewable screen.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the plurality of reconstructed images represent a same subject of interest at different points in time.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the plurality of reconstructed images represent spatially adjacent subject matter at generally the same point in time.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the level of change is characterized by analyzing absolute differences between adjacent reconstructed images in the plurality of reconstructed images.

18. (original) The method of claim 17, wherein the absolute differences are analyzed on a pixel-by-pixel basis.

19. (original) The method of claim 18, wherein characterizing a level of change of the image data includes characterizing change due to noise in the image data, and not including changes due to noise in the presented indicia.

20. (previously presented) A system for processing image data comprising:

a memory device for storing image data;

processing circuitry configured to compare image data representative of a plurality of images acquired via a medical imaging system and not as video, and to generate a scout navigation tool by characterizing a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images, the scout navigation tool including a graphical representation of progressive change between images of the plurality of images and a virtual tool for navigating through the plurality of images based upon the level of change.

21. (original) The system of claim 20, comprising a user viewable display for displaying the scout navigation tool and images from the plurality of images based upon use inputs.

22. (original) The system of claim 21, comprising a user input device for selection of images for viewing from the plurality of images via manipulation of the virtual tool.

23. (original) The system of claim 22, wherein the virtual tool includes a slider displayed adjacent to the graphical representation.

24. (currently amended) A system for diagnosing a patient, comprising:

means for comparing image data representative of a plurality of diagnostic images of the patient acquired via a medical imaging system, wherein the plurality of images represent spatially adjacent subject matter.

means for characterizing a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images; and

means for presenting a viewer with indicia of relative levels of change of the image data for the plurality of images.

25. (previously presented) A system for processing image data comprising:

means for comparing image data representative of a plurality of images acquired via a medical diagnostic imaging system; and

means for generating a scout navigation tool by characterizing a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images, the scout navigation tool including a graphical representation of progressive change between images of the plurality of images and a virtual tool for navigating through the plurality of images based upon the level of change, wherein characterizing a level of change of the image data includes characterizing change due to noise in the image data.

26. (currently amended) A computer program provided on a computer readable medium and containing computer executable instructions for processing image data, comprising:

at least one computer readable medium; and

code stored on the at least one computer readable medium encoding routines for comparing image data representative of a plurality of images acquired via a medical imaging system, characterizing a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images, and presenting a viewer with indicia of relative levels of change of the image data for the plurality of images, wherein the plurality of images represent spatially adjacent subject matter.

27. (previously presented) A computer program provided on a computer readable medium and containing computer executable instructions for diagnosing a patient, comprising:

at least one computer readable medium; and

code stored on the at least one computer readable medium encoding routines for comparing image data representative of a plurality of images acquired via a medical diagnostic imaging system and not as a video, and generating a scout navigation tool by characterizing a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images, the scout navigation tool including a graphical representation of progressive change between images of the plurality of images and a virtual tool for navigating through the plurality of images based upon the level of change.

28. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the medical imaging system comprises ~~an compute~~a computed tomography system.

29. (currently amended) The method of claim 9, comprising storing the reconstructed images on a picture and archive communications system (PACS), wherein the medical imaging system comprises [[an]]a computed tomography system.